

What Republicans should not do—what they must not do—is squelch any chance for the Senate to debate something as critical and sacrosanct as the right to vote, nor should they pretend like the Federal Government has no role to play in protecting our democracy. On the contrary, throughout history, the Federal Government has sometimes been the only remedy when States try to suppress the vote. And no honest observer can look at the way the States have changed election laws this last year and pretend that there is nothing malicious afoot.

As Senator MANCHIN said earlier this year regarding congressional action on voting rights, inaction is not an option. Let me repeat that because this is one place where Senator MANCHIN and I agree. As Senator MANCHIN said earlier this year regarding congressional action on voting rights, “Inaction is not an option.” Inaction is not an option. I agree. All 49 other Democrats agree with Senator MANCHIN. Inaction is not an option.

The Senate can rise to the task if given the chance, but its Members must vote to begin debate first.

BUILD BACK BETTER AGENDA

Mr. President, now on Build Back Better, for decades now, millions of families in this country have found the basic American promise that if you work hard, then you can have a better life for yourselves and your loved ones, the proverbial American dream—Americans have found it is getting harder to reach. That is what creates a sourness in the land. That sunny optimism so crucial to our identity has receded away from view.

Democrats have promised to do something about it. When Senate Democrats secured our majority this year, we committed to delivering on the trust that the American people placed in us and to respond to the challenge of our times. That is why we immediately set to work and passed the American Rescue Plan to propel our economy out of the crisis of COVID. And that has been the driving force behind our efforts to make President Biden's Build Back Better agenda into law.

Last night, I continued my discussions with Speaker PELOSI and President Biden as we work to an agreement on legislation we can bring to the floor. I know that, throughout the day, the President will meet with a number of Members from both Chambers, and, as the week progresses, I will continue to hold talks with my colleagues as we move forward to the finish line.

Here is what matters: Build Back Better legislation is going to dramatically improve the lives of tens of millions of American families for years to come. Something that impactful is not an easy feat, but we are going to keep working. By passing this legislation, we can create good-paying jobs for this generation and the next; we can lower costs and cut taxes for American families while taking overdue steps to

meaningfully address the climate crisis.

We still have work to do, but we are going to continue at it until—until the job is done.

I yield the floor.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

THE ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Republican leader is recognized.

THE ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, every day, American families are feeling real pain because of the reckless and inflationary policies that Democrats have already rammed through. The American people are facing the highest inflation in more than 10 years. They are paying an extra dollar a gallon at the pump and soaring prices at the grocery store. Real wages are down. Rising prices are wiping out raises and bonuses. Last month's jobs report was another huge disappointment, showing less than half the hiring that had been expected.

But, amazingly, the Biden administration and many of our colleagues seem to think the cure for this inflation hangover is the hair of the dog. They are trying to exploit the economic anxiety they have created by pitching yet another multitrillion-dollar socialist spending spree. They want to try to inflate their way out of inflation.

Oh, and get this: The Biden administration is simultaneously saying that their latest spending spree will cost zero dollars.

Let me say that again. The Biden administration is simultaneously saying their latest spending spree will cost zero dollars—it will be totally free—and it will come with massive, historic tax hikes in order to pay for it.

All this socialism is going to be totally free of charge—but it also needs the biggest IRS cash grab in decades in order to pay for it. Go figure. The Democrats' plan contains more than 40 separate tax hikes on the American people—40 separate tax hikes on the American people. These increases would impact taxpayers at every income level. Small business owners and family farmers would feel yet another pinch. Even the tax hikes that are ostensibly aimed at Washington Democrats' favorite punching bag, American industry, would find their way back down to working families.

Democrats' war on affordable American energy would hit pocketbooks just in time to spike winter heating bills and the prices of made-in-America goods. Their corporate tax hikes would leave American businesses paying a higher tax rate than businesses—listen to this—in communist China. As the Joint Committee on Taxation has shown, two-thirds of the burden of Democrats' proposed new taxes on businesses would fall on lower and middle-income Americans—two-thirds.

But Washington Democrats aren't just laying out massive new tax hikes in the light of day; they also want to

hand the IRS new snooping powers to start digging through individual Americans' bank accounts. They want to pay for their reckless taxing-and-spending spree by treating normal American households like everybody is under audit. They want to treat normal American households like everybody is under audit.

So, to review, this has been the story of Democrats' unified control of government in 2021. Here is what they have done: First, they knee-capped our economic recovery with stifling spending, including to pay Americans more to stay on the sidelines than to rejoin the workforce. Then, as working families feel the pinch of runaway prices, they are putting forward even more spending and also massive tax hikes. As icing on the cake, they have schemed for even greater access to Americans' personal finances so Washington bureaucrats can spy—can spy—on citizens' routine transactions.

This is not what American voters signed up for, and it won't earn a shred of support from this side of the aisle.

PROTESTS

Mr. President, now on another matter, last week, Washington, DC, was again the site of illegal political violence from the radical left. A mob of environmental extremists set upon the Department of the Interior. They shoved through blocked doors. They hurt the police and security personnel who tried to hold the line. These radicals put one law enforcement officer actually in the hospital.

Political violence and attacks on government buildings are flatout wrong no matter who is perpetrating them or what they claim to believe. That is why it is puzzling that last week's incidents attracted so little attention and condemnation. The White House was directly asked about the day's demonstrations just a few hours after the violence and the break-in occurred. Instead of condemning the radicals, the Biden administration actually praised them—praised them.

The White House Press Secretary was asked about the protests multiple hours after the violence and the break-in and said—this is a direct quote—“Of course we're listening to advocates and people who have been elevating the issue of climate for decades. They have important voices.”

So that is how the Biden administration officially described the demonstrators who put a cop in the hospital—“important voices.” This is just absurd. But those weren't just regrettable comments; they capture the politicized and selective approach to law enforcement that increasingly defines the Democratic Party.

Last year, our Nation saw a 30-percent jump in homicides—the biggest jump in the murder rate in modern history; the worst spike in the homicide rate in modern American history. The head of the National Center for Health Statistics says it was the worst increase in more than 100 years, since at

least 1905. Actually, he went on to say that even 1905 wasn't comparable because that was likely a clerical matter. So the experts don't really know the last time the murder rate shot up this much, but we know it was before the average American family had electricity or indoor plumbing. That was a long time ago.

Responding to this terrible trend should be very simple. It should be a no-brainer for elected officials at every level: more and better resources for more and better policing for more and better community safety.

Instead, liberal local officials across the country from city halls and city councils to right here in Congress have gotten caught up in the radicalism of "defund the police."

As one leftwing House Member put it, "Not only do we need to disinvest from police . . . we need to completely dismantle"—"dismantle"—her local police department." That was a Member of the Congress.

Another declared, "Policing in our country is inherently and intentionally racist."

One news story from last weekend reported that "a crowd of 100 people wreaked havoc in downtown Portland, Oregon, this week—smashing storefront windows, lighting dumpsters on fire and causing at least \$500,000 in damage—but police officers didn't stop them. Portland Police Bureau officials say that's because of legislation passed by Oregon lawmakers this year, which restricts the tools they can use to confront people vandalizing buildings and causing mayhem." So apparently it is OK in Portland to do those kinds of things because of legislation they passed out in Oregon.

While all of this is percolating, what is the Department of Justice focused on?

Where is the Attorney General training his firepower?

Well, here is the answer: Two weeks ago, Attorney General Garland published a special memorandum directing Federal law to focus specifically on parents who are dissatisfied with "woke" school boards and far-left indoctrination. You get the picture here.

The worst spike in the murder rate in over a century and the Attorney General wants main justice laser-focused on—listen to this—parents who are asking questions about their kids' curriculum. It is beyond parody.

To be perfectly clear, I never offered anything but condemnation for violence and threats in the political square, but local law enforcement is fully capable of handling isolated incidents where crimes are committed. There is absolutely no reason—none—for Attorney General Garland to pull this J. Edgar Hoover act on American parents. But these strange and warped priorities are defining the Biden administration's approach: soft on crime; heavy on indulging far-left fads.

Currently deadlocked in the Judiciary Committee is the nomination of

Rachael Rollins, a would-be U.S. Attorney who has a national reputation for being soft on crime during her time as a prosecutor. In her current role as district attorney, the nominee has said that prosecutors in her jurisdiction should—listen to this—decline to prosecute a whole laundry list of crimes—just decline to prosecute them. From shoplifting to trespassing, to drug possession with the intent to distribute, Ms. Rollins wants her county to be a place where these crimes get free passes.

And the Biden administration rewards this with a big promotion?

Mr. President, support for equal justice, support for law enforcement, and support for the innocent people they protect go hand in hand. It is time for the Biden administration to get serious about the rule of law.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority whip.

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as if in morning business.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

REMEMBERING TIMUEL BLACK

Mr. DURBIN. Mr. President, it was December 7, 1941, a young African-American man from the South Side of Chicago was celebrating his 23rd birthday. He was in a neighborhood tavern, and somebody bolted through the front door and cried out that the Japanese had attacked Pearl Harbor.

In 1943, that same young man was inducted into the U.S. Army, a segregated institution at the time. He landed in Normandy within days of D-day. He fought across France in the Battle of the Bulge. While his unit regrouped, they heard rumors—horrible rumors—about a camp near Weimar, Germany. This young soldier and his commanding officer hopped into a jeep to see for themselves. What he witnessed at Buchenwald, the Nazi death camp, changed this man forever.

As he recalled in his memoir, his first thought was "this is what happened to my ancestors." This is what happens when human beings see others as less than human.

Then he made a vow to himself. He said:

I made an emotional decision that when I returned from the Army, the rest of my life would be spent trying to make [the place] where I live, and the bigger world, a place where all people could have peace and justice.

That soldier's name was Timuel Black. He kept that vow faithfully for 76 years. Tim Black was a foot soldier for justice. He died last week at the age of 102, living in the neighborhood that had been his home nearly all his life, a place that he personally called a "Sacred Ground," the South Side of Chicago.

His passing is our loss—to our city, our State, and our Nation. If you are not from Chicago, you may not know his name, but we all live in an America

that is better because Timuel Black helped shape it. He was a living link to some of our Nation's worst sins and our greatest achievements.

All four of Tim Black's grandparents were born into slavery. When he was a year old, Tim Black and his parents left Alabama and the terrorism of Jim Crow and headed to Chicago, part of the first wave of America's Great Migration. They settled on the South Side in a then-segregated neighborhood now known as Bronzeville.

After he served in World War II, Tim Black returned to Chicago. He graduated from Roosevelt University, earned a master's degree in history from the University of Chicago. He was teaching history in Chicago public schools in 1955 when he heard a young minister speaking on television, he was so moved that he decided, at his own expense, to fly to Montgomery, AL, to meet this man, a man by the name of Martin Luther King, Jr.

In 1963, Dr. King and the great African-American labor leader A. Philip Randolph called on Tim Black. They asked him to organize Chicago's contingent to come to Washington for the great March on Washington. Three years later, Tim Black asked them to return the favor and he persuaded Dr. King to bring his campaign for racial justice to Chicago. Together, they pressed for an end to discriminatory housing laws that squeezed many of the city's Black residents into overpriced, ramshackle apartments in unsafe, segregated neighborhoods with few jobs and failing schools.

In 1975, after decades working at high schools, Tim Black became a professor of sociology, anthropology, and Black history at what is now known as Harold Washington College. He was the Griot of Chicago, who preserved the rich history of the Great Migration and Bronzeville. He was also a brilliant political strategist who understood how to use his power to help others.

So, in 1982, Harold Washington, who had been his friend since they were children, was representing their neighborhood in the U.S. House of Representatives. Professor Black and a few others went to Harold Washington and said: You have to run for mayor of Chicago.

Washington replied: "Sure. If you get 50,000 new Black voters and raise \$100,000, then I'll consider it."

Washington figured that was the end of it; they would never reach those goals. But Professor Tim Black started a fundraising drive and helped organize a voter registration campaign that ultimately registered not 100,000, not 50,000, but 263,000 new voters in Chicago, and he raised more than \$1 million for the Harold Washington campaign.

In 1983, with the support from voters from all backgrounds—Black, White, and Brown—Harold Washington became Chicago's first Black mayor.

A decade later, a young lawyer by the name of Barack Obama sought out